

NAPAHE

The Art of Executive Onboarding

A Panel Discussion

March 12, 2026

NAPAHE 39th Annual National Conference & Business Meeting

San Antonio, TX

Panelists

NA PA HE

- **Trina R. Smith**, Chief of Staff for Academic Affairs
Georgia Southern University
- **Gem Perkins**, Executive Assistant to the Provost
The College of New Jersey (TCNJ)
- **Jill Lange**, Chief of Staff to the Provost
Metropolitan State University of Denver
- **Morgan Fradenburgh**, Executive Assistant to the Provost & VCAA
Montana State University Billings

Audience Question:

- **How long have you been a PA in
Higher Education?**

Audience Question:

- **How many Higher Education executives have you supported over the course of your career?**

Audience Question:

- **What is the longest amount of time you have supported a single principal?**

Audience Question:

- **What is the shortest amount of time you have supported a single principal?**

Panelist Question:

- **What are some of the hurdles you've encountered when onboarding a new principal?**

Panelist Question:

- **What sort of timeline is reasonable for a successful onboarding?**

Panelist Question:

- **What tools, tips, and tricks have you developed to make the onboarding process smoother?**

Panelist Question:

- **What support systems are in place at your campus for onboarding administrators? If not, who do you go to?**

Panelist Question:

- **How do you teach a new leader the 'unwritten rules' of your specific institution to avoid early culture shock? How do you handle the transition of 'institutional memory'—do you use a briefing binder, a digital dashboard, or something else?**

Q&A and Interactive Discussion

- **Trina R. Smith**, Chief of Staff for Academic Affairs, Georgia Southern University | tsmith@georgiasouthern.edu
- **Gem Perkins**, Executive Assistant to the Provost, The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) | perkinsg@tcnj.edu
- **Jill Lange**, Chief of Staff to the Provost, Metropolitan State University of Denver | jlange7@msudenver.edu
- **Morgan Fradenburgh**, Executive Assistant to the Provost & VCAA, Montana State University Billings | morgan.fradenburgh@msubillings.edu

Thank you!